

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

MEMBER MAJOR PROJECTS BOARD

**Minutes of the Meeting of the above held on Thursday, 29th July, 2021
at 2.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's
Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs J Collingham, S Dark, Mrs A Dickinson, C Joyce, A Kemp, J Lowe and T Parish

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34:

Councillors M de Whalley, C Morley and A Ryves

OFFICERS:

D Gates (via Zoom), L Gore, G Hall (via Zoom), M Henry, W Vincent

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	<u>APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR</u> RESOLVED: Councillor S Dark be appointed Chair for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.	
2	<u>APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR</u> RESOLVED: Councillor Mrs A Dickinson be appointed Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.	
3	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Apologies for absence were received from Alexa Baker and Vanessa Dunmall.	
4	<u>MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.	
5	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u>	

	There were no declarations of interest.	
6	<p><u>MEMBERS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34</u></p> <p>Councillors M de Whalley, C Morley and A Ryves (via Zoom) were presented under Standing Order 34.</p>	
7	<p><u>PROCESS/INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW OF THE MEMBER MAJOR PROJECTS BOARD</u> (Pages 8 - 24)</p> <p>Click here to view a recording of this item on You Tube</p> <p>Councillors M de Whalley, C Morley and A Ryves (via zoom) were in attendance under Standing Order 34.</p> <p>Councillor Kemp thanked the Assistant Director for the presentation and referred generally to risk management and the lessons learned report, that recommended particular officer's attendance at the Officer Major Projects Board Meeting and added that it may be a recruitment issue, Eastlaw were not always present and there was also a continuing issue regarding the register and charges against council property. The Assistant Director explained that the last 18 months had been tricky and it was fair to say that there had been capacity issues, particularly in relation to legal services and that sometimes attendance at meetings was difficult. The Chief Executive commented that legal support was an issue and explained that recently a report had been considered at the Corporate Performance Panel and would be presented to Cabinet 3 August for the appointment of a full-time Monitoring Officer. Currently the council only had a part-time Monitoring Officer arrangement with Eastlaw and the council was therefore conscious of the need to sure up the legal support.</p> <p>Councillor Collingham made the following observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the council's major housing projects compared with other similar councils. It would be useful to have a summary of projects prior to the commencement of the meeting and what the council hoped to achieve. It was also be useful if the side bar could be collapsed so the presentation could be seen on the whole screen. • Use of consultants – Councillor Collingham commented she been involved with the Regeneration and Development Panel over the past 11 years and had yet to feel comfortable regarding the money spent on consultants. The council had a lot of experience in the meeting room and beyond and through working groups, together with officers could do the grass roots work ourselves. <p>Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Morley addressed the Board</p>	

and highlighted the following issues:

- Resourcing – and referred to the last Audit Committee meeting when the S151 officer said that following questions I raised, the reserve fund was not as badly affected as was thought because of staff efficiencies, I commented that this was not efficiencies as the council had just lost staff and had not yet been replaced and that was noticed in reactions received through Members Inquiries Box and elsewhere that resource of officers was an issue at the moment and needed addressing.
- Staff change programme – associate staff had not taken risk mitigation processes as seriously as they should have and gave examples. The staff training change programme should set out personal objectives and performance management structures. The last Corporate Risk Register highlighted that it had not taken seriously West Winch or Parkway and also presented misleading information regarding the major projects programme and provided examples, including due diligence not undertaken regarding subsidiaries. Councillor Morley commented that he was waiting assurances from the Monitoring Officer that Eastlaw had been operating appropriate governance and also Project Managers themselves.
- In his view, the Member Major Projects Board was definitely an overview and scrutiny board and it should be given the credence and priority that other scrutiny panels had at the moment and deserved in the future and to say that it was not a scrutiny board denied that overview, monitoring, scrutiny affects that there was within that board and asked that someone look at this point as part of the review of the overview and scrutiny processes which were to be updated.

The Chair thanked Councillor Morley for his comments regarding the scrutiny function of the Member Major Projects Board and undertook to look at the points raised.

Councillor Parish commented that he was new to the Board and had listened with interest and added that it would be easier if presentations were sent to Councillors to enable them to view on their iPad. Councillor Parish made general comments on the impact of getting a major project wrong and gave examples of the King's Lynn Innovation Centre and Parkway and when a decision was made to stop a major project. However, going forward re major projects he hoped that opposition members were listened to. In conclusion, Councillor Parish raised questions regarding staff doing their day job as well as being appointed as a project lead for specific projects.

Councillor Joyce stated that the Member Major Projects Board was neither a scrutiny or decision making body and that the terms of reference should be reviewed by the Corporate Performance Panel, Audit Committee and Council. Councillor Joyce highlighted that a decision cannot be scrutinised before a been made and clarification was therefore required. Councillor Joyce also referred to projects

both within the public and private sector and the borrowing/ return of investment available to the council.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Ryves addressed the Board and stated that after listening to the comments made by Councillor Joyce, there seemed to be opportunity to review the Terms of Reference of the Member Major Projects Board. Reference was made to the absent advantage this council and other councils had in the availability of competitive borrowing rates which presented an opportunity to undertake a significant number of major projects which would generate income and also have the benefit of making the borough a better place. Councillor Ryves also outlined the importance of each project having a viability study and monitoring arrangements. Reference was also made to the benefits of the current King's Lynn Innovation Centre building, the proposal for the provision of an incubation centre and the importance of developing and nurturing new businesses.

Councillor Kemp stated that she would like to see an appreciation of financial, environmental, social and reputational risks. Councillor Kemp gave examples of the Housing Access Road proposed for West Winch and the Town Investment Plan and highlighted the importance of consultation, the overarching need on the impact on the building in the town as well as the required infrastructure, pressures on roads and commented that there was a need to look at the overall cumulative risk.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Dickinson, Portfolio Holder for Finance addressed the Board and commented that she had listened to comments made by Councillors and wished to illustrate what the Administration had in mind to mitigate some of issues raised today by Councillors. As Portfolio for Finance, it had fallen to me to take major projects a lot more seriously than perhaps in past and focus to be on major projects and to treat them with the respect that they deserved. It was therefore important to realign issues relating to with major projects to ensure conformity with previous recommendations, for example, each project should be properly appraised for capital spend, funding, long term financial implications, particularly relating to revenue, had the appropriate documentation and cross-referenced to other council corporate documents such as the corporate business plan and risk register. My take was that the council should start with the approved Capital Programme and add to it as new schemes were approved as the Capital Programme forms part of the financial plan that cabinet and council approved in February each year and any new schemes that come on board subsequent to that require approval in the same way. In her view Councillor Dickinson stated that she thought that Member Major Projects Board must scrutinise decisions and therefore there was a need for the terms of reference to be changed and a review would be carried out in the near future.

	<p>In relation to the comments made by the Assistant Director on a contingency and the current Capital Programme and no specific contingency would be something to take on board in future, whether it was a single line or scheme specific and could look into that in more detail. Councillor Ryves mentioned Parkway which had a long history and was not without problems and it was fair to say Members should look at Cabinet agenda for 3 August 2020 as Parkway was on the agenda and there was a detailed appraisal of the project contained in the papers. Councillor Dickinson made reference to resourcing and current issues and outlined the importance of understanding how savings worked on vacancies.</p> <p>The Chair summarised the points raised above and commented that in his view as Chair it was important to get together and move the work forward. The Chair provided background information and advised that Cabinet would consider a report of the review of the Terms of Reference of the Member Major Projects Board on 24 September 2021. The Chair also stated that he agreed with the comments made by Councillors Dickinson and Morley that the Member Major Projects Board needed to be a scrutiny body but highlighted the requirement not to tread on other scrutiny panels. It was highlighted that it would be necessary to look at the confidentiality of the Member Major Projects Board. In conclusion, the Chair proposed following the 24 September 2021 Cabinet meeting that an additional Member Major Projects Board meeting be scheduled for the last week of September/early October 2021.</p> <p>Councillor Joyce stated that Cabinet Members could not participate in the scrutiny process by law and therefore could not be a member of a scrutiny and overview committee.</p>	
8	<p><u>WORK PROGRAMME</u></p> <p>Click here to view a recording of this item on You Tube</p> <p>An additional meeting of the Member Major Projects Board would be scheduled during the last week of September/early October 2021.</p>	WV
9	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Member Major Projects Board will take place on 3 November 2021, 10.00 am in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.</p> <p>An additional meeting would be scheduled end September/early</p>	

	October 2021.	WV
10	<p><u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u></p> <p>Click here to view a recording of this item on You Tube</p> <p>RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.</p>	
11	<p><u>FOR INFORMATION ONLY: AGENDAS AND MINUTES FROM THE OFFICER PROJECT BOARD MEETINGS</u></p> <p>The Member Major Projects Board received the Agendas and the Minutes from the Officer Project Board meetings held on:</p> <p>12 August 2020 17 September 2020 16 December 2020 20 January 2021 25 February 2021 25 March 2021 21 April 2021 24 May 2021 21 June 2021</p> <p>Officers present responded to questions and comments from the Member Major Projects Board on the Confidential Minutes of the Officer Major Projects Board meetings.</p>	

The meeting closed at 4.13 pm